

THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REUNION

OF THE

OLD SETTLERS

— OF —

JOHNSON COUNTY



AUGUST 22, 1901

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IOWA CITIZEN PUBLISHING COMPANY, PRINTERS

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PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
Old Settlers of Johnson  
County, Ia.

AT THEIR ANNUAL REUNION, AUGUST 22, 1901

THE PICNIC.

Unmindful of the dust of Iowa's driest summer, the gathering clouds and rumble of distant thunder, the pioneers and their descendants began to gather at an early hour around the cabins in the fair grounds.

A gentle shower passed, cooling the air, and by 10 o'clock the sun shone brightly. The day was as fine as could be desired. The attendance was not so large as at some of the past gatherings, yet about six hundred met and passed the most enjoyable day of all our reunions.

At noon the tables were spread and an hour was passed in refreshing the inner man and reviving the spirits with Sueppel's coffee.

At 1 o'clock the people gathered at the speakers' stand. The invocation was pronounced by Rev. H. H. Fairall and the president, David M. Dixon, proceeded to deliver an address as follows:

DAVID M. DIXON'S ADDRESS.

*Old Settlers, Visitors, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

I am glad to see so many of you present this afternoon. It affords me a great deal of pleasure to have this opportunity of bidding you welcome and extending to you a hearty greeting.

Another year has come and gone since we last met beneath the



friendly shade of these beautiful trees. The old cabins have stood silent sentinels marking the events as the days go by. If they could speak they would say that this has been an eventful year, one in which they have experienced greater climatic changes, a year in which the silent reaper has thinned our ranks more than ever before. Let me say here that I believe we should take steps to shield our first cabin from the storms of winter and the heat of summer and dedicate it to the memory of the first settlers of Johnson County. I believe their children and grandchildren would appreciate it more than a granite shaft or a marble slab. You who are familiar with the early history of Johnson county will bear with me while I read a short editorial written over sixty years ago by Mr. Hughes, and found in the Iowa Capital Reporter, volume 1, number 2, of that paper:

"Notwithstanding the extreme inclemency of the weather for two or three days preceding Monday last, every member of the council save one, Mr. Hall of Van Buren, and all except three of the house, Messrs. Hebbard, Weld and Denson, were here in readiness to take their seats on the first day of the session.

"His Excellency Governor Chambers and Secretary Stull were in town, having arrived from Burlington on the Saturday previous. The weather on Friday, on which most of the members started from their homes, was excessively disagreeable, a cold sleet having fallen during the whole day, accompanied by high winds. During the night the rain ceased, but the cold increased and with it the wind to a degree of fierceness sufficient almost to blow the hair off of one's head.

"It did make havoc with the hats and cloaks of those who breasted the pitiless storm, as we happened to know from woeful experience, our companion in the ride from Bloomington (Muscatine) here having been kept pretty busily engaged exercising his trotters in pursuit of the fugitive articles, while upon us devolved every now and then the duty, 'shivering in the wind,' of watching our faithful steed. This occurred in the midst of our large prairies, and was a picture on which a painter might have exercised his talent to good effect. On Sunday the weather, though somewhat more calm, was pretty severe, and we cheerfully bear testimony to the credit due legislators and other public functionaries for their perseverance in reaching here, under such adverse circumstances.

"Once here, however, they were in a haven of safety and com-

fort, and some of them no doubt found things very differently situated from what they had anticipated.

"Taught to believe that they were coming to a place where no conveniences would attend them and where they would perhaps have to spend the winter in a condition bordering on savage life, a widely and totally different state of things presents itself. They find themselves in a most thriving town of seven or eight hundred inhabitants, built upon a site unsurpassed for beauty by any we have ever beheld anywhere in the interior. This we declare in all sincerity, and in this every individual whose mind is unprejudiced on the subject must agree with us.

"They find halls prepared for their assemblage, with every convenience and comfort that they could reasonably desire, and fitted up with a style of neatness and taste highly creditable to those by whom they were arranged. The hands of the ladies of this city, by the by, are plainly perceptible in this arrangement, and many thanks are due them for it. Much credit is due, too, to our public-spirited fellow citizen, Mr. Butler, for his exertions in getting the building in readiness for the reception of the legislature, and he well deserves to be favorably remembered for it.

"But there are other things found here which some probably did not expect to find. They find accommodations for boarding and lodging much more comfortable than they expected. We can speak at any rate for a mess of a dozen or so with whom we have the good fortune to be most agreeably ensconced. If there be any better living or pleasanter quarters in the territory than those of our 'good host of the hill' we have not seen them. They find, too, a highly intelligent and order-loving population, with places of public worship either erected or in the progress of erection, in which we do homage to the Giver of all good. And, 'last though not least,' they find fair women spreading over all that indescribable charm which virtuous women only are capable of producing. With this state of things, who will gainsay that a residence at the new capital of our young territory is a matter to be desired?"

The same paper contains a list of the officers elected for that first Iowa City session, besides a full report of all proceedings up to Saturday, the day of publication. Henry Felkner was the representative from Johnson county, and S. C. Hastings represented Johnson and Muscatine counties in the upper house, then called "council."

The following counties were represented: Lee, Van Buren, Des Moines, Henry, Louisa, Washington, Muscatine, Johnson, Cedar, Jones, Linn, Scott, Clinton, Dubuque, Clayton, Delaware and Jackson.

It is worthy of remark that the seventeen counties have increased to near one hundred. The cabins that then formed Iowa City, the men and women who then made up the sparse population of the territory, are gone, and today we behold a vast population, hundreds of beautiful cities and millions of acres smiling with teeming crops. Let us today honor the memory and strive to emulate the example of the pioneers who saw in the distance the coming of this proud commonwealth and in hardship and privation laid well the foundations of peerless, grand old Iowa as a state.

The report of the necrological committee was read by G. R. Irish as follows:

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#### REPORT OF NECROLOGICAL COMMITTEE.

At reunions such as this which brings us together today the thoughts of the pioneers and old settlers turn to the past. They look toward things gone by rather than toward those to come; their own achievements in the new land, instead of the plans of their children, occupy their minds and claim attention in their utterances. The view turns back to the past, to what has been accomplished, rather than looks forward to new worlds to conquer. The pioneer has wrought a great work, and inclination and advice bid him note that he has fulfilled a magnificent destiny and well earned a period of rest and recreation. Especially is this true in this splendid eastern part of Iowa, where less than a generation has sufficed to transform the prairie into a garden and bring to the early settler not alone the means and opportunity of a restful old age, but also to see his children provided with a competence that a few years ago would have been rated a fortune. In the progress of a superb development, we have in Iowa reached that period in which the landholder is the true capitalist; where the farm he has tilled and improved yields an assured and certain dividend. That this is so is due to the labors of the pioneers, the old settlers who here today celebrate in almost family reunion the incidents and events of the past half century, leaving

to younger and stronger hands the carrying on of the work they began in poverty and have brought to its present stage "with toil incredible," to use the words of the poet.

It is a privilege of old age to be garrulous, yet you will all agree with us that no old settler, no pioneer, ever talked too long at one of these meetings, and that it has always been with an effort the society procured speakers for its annual meetings. There is a sacredness and solemnity that gathers in an almost intangible and yet understood mist about the men and women and incidents of the past that gives to them a quality of reverence we hesitate to break in upon. Their names bring up by mere mention the tenderest associations and recall years long past when the pioneers of this county constituted as it were one family, enduring common hardships, sharing each other's burdens, and striving for a common end.

The absence of loved and familiar faces tells us, without the formality of a roll call that there are new-made vacancies in the ranks of the old settlers; that some who a year ago were of our number have met with us and exchanged greetings for the last time; that they have entered into the reward of those who are faithful to the end. We miss them from the pleasures of this reunion, miss them sadly, and yet we rejoice that they have wrought a grand work, builded to themselves noble monuments, and left a record that shall be an inspiration to us 'and to thousands yet to come. We are proud of the part they bore in the making of Iowa, proud of their achievements, proud that their names are upon our roll of membership.

Time forbids that we should speak at length and as we would wish of each who has since our last meeting gone over to the silent majority. Some among them filled a large place in public life, and some were by long membership in this association and by close intimacy especially endeared to us. We will be pardoned for departing from the mere necrological list to make mention of a few of our deceased members who have been especially identified with the history of our society, and whose efforts have in more than formal membership been given to perpetuating the history of the old settlers of Johnson county.

Theodore Sutton Parvin was not one of the earliest settlers of the county, nor had he for some years past been a resident here. Yet he enjoyed the singular distinction of being an "emeritus"

member of every pioneer and old settlers' association in Iowa, and as a judge of the supreme court is a judge of every district court of the state and a justice of the peace in every township, so Dr. Parvin was greeted as a member of every organization of this kind in Iowa. He was the link that bound the Iowa of today to the Iowa of pre-territorial times. He was born in New Jersey in 1815, came to Iowa in 1838, to Iowa City in 1860, and died at Cedar Rapids on the 28th of June last. Coming to the territory in 1838, the succeeding year he visited Johnson county in his official capacity as prosecuting attorney of the first district court held in the county, held at the then county seat, a frontier trading house, the resort of Indians and trappers, a place now scarce to be identified, and perhaps seen by no one now present. There was then no suggestion of such a place as Iowa City, little thought of the great things that would be wrought by the pioneers and their children. From its organization in 1844 to his death he was secretary of the Grand Lodge of Masons of Iowa. From 1860 for a decade he was an honored teacher in the State University, and until 1885 a resident of Iowa City. These were perhaps the happiest years of his life; loved at home, honored abroad, the weight of sorrow that comes from separation and death not yet laid upon his heart and home, he was surrounded by all that can bless and make man happy. Crowned with honors, in ripe old age yet spared from its feebleness, his mind clear and bright, he lay down gently and peacefully to the last long rest; and as he came to this city in his youth, at the beginning of his life work, and again in the strength of his manhood, so at the close he was brought here for life's last repose, amid the scenes he loved so dearly. You who are present know how close this old settlers' association was to his heart; how often he attended its meetings and with what pleasure you heard him speak. He was one of its founders and held every office within its gift, but in no relation did he so much rejoice as in the opportunity it gave him to meet and greet his old friends.

Colonel Edward W. Lucas, who came to Iowa in 1838, with his father, the first territorial governor, was one of the organizers and prominent members of this society and a familiar figure at its annual meetings. In all that pertained to the building up of the city and county he took a leading position and through a long life maintained a high place in the regard of his fellow cit-

izens. He was born in Ohio in 1825, came to Iowa in 1839, and died at his home in this city on the 16th of December last in the seventy-sixth year of his age. He was one of the incorporators of the Johnson County Agricultural Society, and from its organization in 1853 to the last fair took an active interest in its maintenance. In his public life he was lieutenant colonel of the 14th Iowa Infantry, postmaster of this city and twice represented the county in the legislature. Conspicuous in war, a leader among our people in peace, he worthily filled a large place in life, and leaves a worthy record of the son of Iowa's first governor.

One whose great pleasure it was to meet with you, one of the first settlers of this county, has since the last meeting passed from this circle of friends she loved so well and where she had lived so long. Mrs. Sarah A. Myers was born in New York in 1825, and came to Iowa about 1841, her husband being one of the first, if not the first to make claim to public land in this county. Her death occurred at Salt Lake City in December last, she having gone there to spend the winter with her daughter. Mrs. Myers was probably known to more of the pioneers than any other woman in this membership, and no one more appreciated than she the friendships here formed. Her loving sympathy brought light to many a darkened home, and her noble charitable work will long enshrine her memory among those who were her associates in the Silent Ministry and with those who received its tenderly bestowed gifts.

N. H. Brainerd was not a pioneer of this county, but he was a type of the strong men who made Iowa. Born in New Hampshire in 1818, he came to this city in 1856, and in 1861 was appointed by Governor Kirkwood as his military secretary. Returning here at the close of his service, he purchased the Iowa City Republican and conducted that newspaper with marked success for many years. He was postmaster for four years, and for several terms a member of the city council. In each of these places he demonstrated the qualities that made him a strong and popular citizen and an excellent public officer. He was for some years a member of this association and it received his active support and sympathy.

Mrs. Bryan Dennis was born in Ohio in 1825 and came with



her parents to Iowa City in 1840. Her death took place November 29. Married in 1844, Mr. Dennis selected the land that for more than half a century was to be their home, on what was then the extremest frontier. Here indeed she lived the life and underwent the trials of the pioneers, the privations and dangers that belong to isolation in a new country, and out of its hardships built up a noble and Christian womanhood that is honored and cherished in this society. In a more distinctive sense than any of those we have named she was a pioneer, and it was her privilege to see the log cabin grow to the stately mansion, and the flower-spangled prairie become the granary of the West, and know that she had borne a large part in the great work.

We have selected these as typical members of the association, whose death is sorrowfully recorded. Of the many who have passed from our roster we may but set down regretfully name and date, saying that they have well filled out their years and honored their home and state with good lives.

The necrological list is as follows, the date following the name being that of coming to this county:

## 1900.

- August 26—D. V. Conklin, Iowa City, 1838, aged 75 years.
- September 1—August Lewz, Jr., born in Iowa City, 1863.
- September 10—J. H. Hanlon, of Fremont township.
- September 16—Vincent Gross, Liberty township, 1848.
- September 19—M. H. Carson, born in this county, 1848.
- September 19—James Larkin, aged 83 years, Iowa City.
- September 20—Edward Maule, Iowa City.
- September 21—Benjamin Horner, 85 years of age, Iowa City.
- September 26—Mrs. James S. Mahana, Iowa City.
- September 30—Isaac Eaton, Iowa City, 1854, 83 years of age.
- October 3—Mrs. Margaret Harrison, born in the county, 1850.
- October 13—Patrick Corbett, 1861, of Hardin township.
- October 22—Mrs. Henry Miller, 1854, Iowa City.
- October 25—Geo. L. Flannagan, born in Iowa City, 1871.
- November 3—William E. Cupp, Liberty township, 1855.
- November 12—E. Warner, Iowa City, 1856.
- November 17—Mrs. William Figg, Pleasant Valley township, 1854.
- November 17—Owen McCabe, Oxford township.
- November 19—Mrs. Margaret Debellem, Iowa City.
- November 23—James Herring, Iowa City, 1870.
- November 23—Mrs. Christian Grabien, of Madison township.

- December 15—Mrs. Ruth Choate, Iowa City, 1855, aged 84 years.
- December 17—Mrs. Apolonia Kriz, Iowa City, aged 83 years.
- December 19—Mrs. Clara Englert, Iowa City, 1842, aged 75 years.
- December 22—August Lewz, 1857, Iowa City, aged 76 years.
- December 22—Mrs. Sydney Smith, Iowa City, aged 72 years.
- December 22—Adam Dobry, Iowa City, aged 71 years.
- December 25—Gerhard Steinsbruch, of Big Grove township.
- December 27—Lambert Klingler, 1855, aged 78 years.
- December 30—James B. Edmonds, 1850, aged 70 years, died at Washington, D. C.

## 1901.

- January 3—W. F. Buck, Union township, 1844, aged 75 years.
- January 5—W. W. Smith, Iowa City, 1856, aged 78 years.
- January 8—Abner Boone, Washington township, 1846, aged 74 years.
- January 11—A. E. Westenhaber, 1860, died at Oskaloosa, aged 68 years.
- January 12—Patrick Donovan, Graham township, 1853, aged 74 years.
- January 13—Mrs. J. M. Files, Madison township, 1859.
- January 13—John Adelsheim, Iowa City, 1856, aged 80 years.
- January 19—Mrs. J. H. Murphy, aged 86 years, died at Davenport.
- January 23—Mrs. Mary Alt, North Liberty, aged 73 years.
- January 31—Mrs. Mary Frizzell, Iowa City.
- February 1—Joel Linkhart of Oxford township.
- February 1—Catherine Haley, died at Guthrie Center, aged 83 years.
- February 4—John Louis, born in Iowa City, 1858.
- February 9—Dennis Hogan, Iowa City, 1853, aged 86 years.
- February 14—Mrs. Sager, Washington township, aged 89 years.
- February 14—Mrs. O. G. Babcock, Madison township, 1839, aged 70 years.
- February 14—Christian Grabien, Madison township, 1855, aged 70 years.
- February 15—Mrs. E. W. Switzer, Iowa City, 1857, aged 89 years.
- February 24—Mrs. Mary Jones, Union township, aged 82 years.
- February 27—Mrs. Catherine Burnes, Union township, aged 70 years.
- March 2—S. L. Byington, born in the county, 1862.
- March 6—Mrs. W. E. Cupp, Liberty township, 1855, aged 73 years.
- March 12—Mrs. C. C. Hull, Iowa City.
- March 21—Mrs. Johanna Mungovan, aged 78 years.
- March 25—Vincent Grissell, Iowa City, 1860, aged 70 years.
- March 28—Mrs. Frederica Griesmayer, Iowa City, 1867, aged 76 years.
- April 2—A. B. Cree, Iowa City, 1855, aged 70 years.
- April 2—Mrs. Lavina Tomlin, Iowa City, 1861, aged 59 years.
- April 4—Thomas Hanlon, Iowa City, 1867, aged 69 years.

- April 7—Mrs. Jemima McCleary, Iowa City, 1850, aged 74 years.  
 April 11—William J. Hotz, born in Iowa City, 1858.  
 April 14—Solomon C. Grimm, born in Iowa City, 1861.  
 April 22—Jacob Dull, 1854, died at Atlantic, Iowa, aged 82 years.  
 April 24—Mrs. Mary Kisor, 1855, aged 73 years.  
 April 30—Michael Beecher, Graham township, 1854, aged 84 years.  
 May 7—Rev. Edward N. Barrett, Iowa City, 1888, aged 58 years.  
 May 19—J. P. Sanxay, born in Iowa City, 1846.  
 May 21—Mrs. James Hardy, Penn township, 1856, aged 74 years.  
 May 22—J. W. Pauba, of Solon.  
 May 22—Mrs. Amanda T. Zimmerman, Lone Tree, 1869, aged 94 years.  
 May 27—Robert Smith, Jefferson township, aged 76 years.  
 May 29—James Welsh, Iowa City, 1866, aged 68 years.  
 May 30—C. F. Close, born in Iowa City, 1867, died in California.  
 June 5—Ralph Price, born in Iowa City, 1876, died at Cedar Rapids.  
 June 10—Samuel Sharpless, Iowa City, 1876, aged 79 years.  
 June 14—Mrs. Emely A. Folsom, Iowa City, 1842, aged 75 years.  
 June 15—Mrs. H. A. Strub, born in Iowa City, 1854.  
 July 8—Robert S. Finkbine, 1850, died at Des Moines, aged 73 years.  
 July 11—George W. Schell, 1839, died at Lawrence, Kansas, aged 85 years.  
 July 23—Mrs. Mary Davidson, Jefferson township, aged 75 years.  
 July 26—George Adams, Big Grove township, aged 65 years.  
 July 28—Mrs. Elizabeth Aicher, Iowa City, aged 72 years.  
 July 29—George Summerhays, Clear Creek township, aged 85 years.  
 July 30—Mrs. Mary Sullivan, Newport township.  
 August 1—Mrs. Mary Goodrich, Iowa City, 1860, aged 77 years.  
 August 4—George Fry, Washington township, 1849, aged 92 years.  
 August 4—Mrs. Barbara Miller, Washington township, 1848, aged 86 years.  
 August 6—Mrs. C. Hormel, died at West Liberty, aged 63 years.  
 August 9—W. H. Hillborn, Oxford township, 1854, aged 71 years.  
 August 15—Samuel A. Shellady, born in Johnson county, 1854.  
 Cauley, Miss Anna  
 Connell, Mrs. John  
 Dille, Louis B. 80  
 Henryon, Mrs. Bradford,  
 Hemlick, John  
 Hindman, Rev. John  
 Hjams, Wm. E.

Wilson, David J.

JOHN SPRINGER,  
 JOHN E. JAYNE,  
 HORACE SANDERS.

} Committee.

# THE FOLLOWING LETTERS WERE READ BY THE COMMITTEE.

CLOUD CHIEF, OKLA., Sept. 1, 1901.

*Hon. M. Cavanagh, Iowa City, Iowa.*

*Dear Sir and Friend:*—In the Iowa State Press of August 28, which I have just finished reading, is an account of the thirty-fifth annual reunion of the Old Settlers of Johnson county, Iowa, one of which I might be classed if I was there, and it called to mind the kind invitation that I received from you some time ago asking me to your meeting, or to write you if I could not attend.

In the press of my duties here I see that I neglected to either go or write, and I will now write you a few lines to let you know that I received your kind invitation, and at the same time tell you, and other inquiring friends, that I am yet in the land of the living, as is also my mother, who lives not over a hundred yards from me, on a homestead of her own taking, and my son and daughter, that came to Oklahoma with me, we are all living near each other at present, but my son Arthur was fortunate enough to draw a right to enter a tract of land in the late opening, and I expect he will go from us before long.

We are enjoying reasonably good health at present and have no reason to complain of Oklahoma, although we have a very short corn crop this year. Our wheat crop was good, and our cotton is good, which latter we are now just beginning to harvest, and we think the price will be good also.

I have seen this country grow from government lands to deeded farms, as I did the most of Johnson county, Iowa. I think Iowa the better of the two, but Oklahoma, on account of its milder climate, suits me the better now.

I keep in touch with my old stamping ground by taking the Press, and an occasional letter from one or another old friend, but I hardly ever meet with any people from Johnson county.

I have a married daughter living near Oxford, and a married son living in Los Angeles, Cal., who, with myself, wife and two children here, are all natives of Johnson county.

I would have been glad to have met with you, and may in the future, but until then I will be yours respectfully,

HENRY N. BERRY.

GOLD CREEK, ELKO COUNTY, NEVADA, Aug. 6, 1901.

*To the Chairman of the Committee on Invitations to Annual Meeting of Old Settlers of Johnson County, Iowa.*

*Sir:*—I am in due receipt of your very kind invitation to be present at your annual gathering on the 22nd instant. When your letter reached me I hoped to be able to meet with you in person on the day named, but business matters of much importance to others I now know will deprive me of that pleasure.

I am inclined to ask, where are the Old Settlers of Johnson county? Alas, many of them have long since paid the debt of nature and are sleeping with their fathers; a few yet remain to gladden our hearts as we meet them on these annual visits, and a very few are scattered throughout the various states of the Union. How many gathered here today can recall Mr. Phelps, the Indian trader, whose trading house stood on the east bank of the Iowa river just below where the town of Napoleon, our first county seat, was located? Mr. Phelps told me that he so early as 1826 "cordelled" flatboats from St. Louis to this trading house, which was built that year. Can many of you recall Wheaton Chase, also an Indian trader, whose trading post stood on the bank of Byington creek down in Pleasant Valley? Then there was Allen Stroud, whose cabin stood a little beyond and to the left of Market street in Iowa City. He was a hunter and trapper. On the hill lately known as the Gower place lived, contemporaneously with Stroud, William Brown. I might go on and name many more of the old settlers of the later thirties and early forties, and only half a dozen, it may be, of those present today could recall them. Our fathers and mothers, who braved storms, trackless prairies, the wilderness and its hostile inhabitants that they might build peaceful homes upon the flower garden of Johnson county's prairies, and within her beautiful groves have left us, a handful of their sons and daughters, with a few of their old associates, meet here together and speak their praises and extol their courage, their honor and industry. Shall we stop at this and when death shall have claimed the last of us let the memory of their courageous deeds, their honorable achievements and their works drop into the great ocean of oblivion, their very name to be lost with us? I hope not. Can we not raise a sufficient fund by subscription with which to erect a simple monument to their memory, on the sides of which to inscribe their names, and erect it in some public place, that the generations to come may see to

whom they owe the beginning of the prosperity to be seen about us today and which is to go on increasing as time rolls on? Soldiers whose friendships are cemented by blood of battlefields raise towering monuments to their fallen comrades. Memories are kept alive through centuries by monuments, humble or imposing, of those thought to deserve such notice for deeds of bravery, kindness or philanthropy. Did not these attributes crown the old settlers of Johnson county. And shall we not in a spirit of love and admiration raise a shaft, however plain, to commemorate their works and qualities? I feel that if we fail to do this small work in honor of our parents, their friends and neighbors, old settlers of Johnson county, then should we be considered ingrates.

We cannot expect the many strangers to do this work, for they knew not the courageous, industrious delvers of Johnson county's virgin soil. As I write the names of many of the very first to settle here, when all about was a wilderness, come into my mind, among them the first to die on I believe the ground now occupied by Iowa City, was Bradish, Mr. Foster, who gave us the first threshing machine, and many others.

I most sincerely hope, my friends, that you will take action upon this matter at once. Am sorry indeed that I cannot be with you in person today and enjoy communion with you and help you honor the memory of the Old Settlers of Johnson county, Iowa. I am very truly yours,

CHAS. W. IRISH.

SEATTLE, WASH., July 11, 1901.

*My Dear Mr. Cavanagh:*

Am in receipt of your kind invitation under date of June 26 to meet with the Old Settlers of Johnson county at their annual picnic August 22, and thank you very much therefor.

I regret exceedingly that it will be impossible for me to be present, as I rather expect to take a trip to China and Japan some time during the summer.

Hoping that the occasion may be as pleasant as those in the past have been and with kind greetings to old acquaintances, I remain,

Yours respectfully,

R. R. SPENCER.



ALBANY, ORE., Aug. 10, 1901.

*M. Cavanagh, Iowa City.*

*My Dear Sir:*—Yours of the 26th of June extending the annual invitation to attend the Old Settlers' picnic is received. I regret that I cannot possibly be with you to enjoy the festivities of that occasion, as I had purposed doing, owing as usual to the pressure of business and financial shortage. The day set for your gala day, the 22nd of August, is the anniversary of the writer, whose birthday dates back to 1825, and yet after three-quarters of a century of active life he is hale and hearty; in fact has better health than at any previous time—an illustration of the Darwinian theory of the "survival of the fittest." My present excellent health I attribute to this genial, healthy climate, the mean temperature of which is about 48, and we have no cold weather at all. Our harvest is good this season, in fact we never have a failure of crops.

Should there be anyone desirous of learning anything of this county write me and I will give them any information I can. Regarding your gathering, I doubt not but that you will have a good time, and I hereby extend a "shake" with all the old friends. I will not promise again to attend at some future meeting, but shall try to do so nevertheless, for there is no place I had rather visit than Iowa City and vicinity. Go on with your meetings, friends. It certainly is a source of much good cheer and enjoyment to all who participate.

"Each and all should try to catch

Each pleasure ere it flies,

And from life's treadmill try to snatch

Enjoyment ere it dies.

The happy smiles our spirits cheer

Like sunshine in the rain;

No past or future claims our tears,

No memories bring us pain."

Respectfully,

MILES K. LEWIS.

WASHINGTON, August 16th, 1901.

*Matthew Cavanagh, Esq., of Committee on Invitation Old Settlers Reunion, Iowa City, Iowa.*

*Dear Sir:*—I regret that business demands will not permit my

responding in person to your kind invitation to be present on the occasion of the annual reunion of the Old Settlers of Johnson county.

When I write these lines of regret I am reminded of how fitting and enjoyable it would be for me to visit the scenes of my childhood, and to mingle with the friends and associates of my grandparents, father and mother.

My grandfather, the Rev. Dr. W. W. Woods, was an Iowa pioneer having ventured upon its wild prairies from Indiana, at a period when its prairies were wild and furnished forage for the pony of the red man. Not only did he expound the Presbyterian faith and rear a family of nine musical souls, who later on comprised the choir in the old stone church in Iowa City, but he was a graduate in medicine and compounded for those who were physically distressed. He held a diploma as a lawyer, and his opinions were often rendered without the retainer which is usual today.

Dr. Woods lived on Clinton street at one time and Woods' addition is still a cherished spot in the memory of the descendants. The old grave yard marks the resting place of many of my kin, and the farm over the Iowa river and my old playground at the foot of the Court House hill would serve to remind me of boyhood were I there.

My father, when a young man, went to Iowa City, and was a reporter of debates in the State Legislature. After he had married Martha Woods he conducted the Iowa Reporter, afterward the State Press with the Harrison boys. Later on, when I came on the stage of life, I found among other pleasures one which I have since enjoyed, that of baiting a hook. It was Captain Irish, the father of John and Charley, who took me along to put on the bait and take off the fish he would catch.

Of the Woods family forty-three grandchildren were born, and I am one of the oldest of the tribe. My friends and relatives still live in the State, and we will all continue to give her the warm place in our hearts which should there be cherished.

Extend my regrets to those around you today, and as the great life's battle progresses may the ranks of the Johnson county army sustain its members. That womanhood, manhood, honest devotion to good which characterizes an Iowan anywhere surely prevails superlatively in Johnson county daughters and sons.

Wishing you much joy and continued prosperity, believe me to be,

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD SYLVESTER.

QUIMBY, IOWA, July 18, 1901.

*M. M. Cavanagh, Iowa City, Iowa.*

*My Dear Sir:*—Your kind invitation of June 26 to attend the Old Settlers' picnic at Iowa City on August 22 has been duly received.

Providence permitting, I expect to be present with you on that date. I am, with regards, Cordially yours,

EDMUND SHEPARD.

SAN FRANCISCO, August 12th, 1901.

*Hon. M. Cavanagh, Chairman Committee.*

*Dear Sir:*—I had promised myself and family the pleasure of attending the old settlers' annual meeting this year, but we find ourselves denied that indulgence. I hope to be able to attend the next meeting, and greet the few who remain of the first generation of pioneers and take by the hand the children and grandchildren whose best endowment is their inheritance of the courage, independence and thrift of their frontier ancestry.

May your reunion be full of pleasure, health be in all your homes, and time touch kindly all the old settlers.

Very truly,

JOHN P. IRISH.

JEFFERSON, IA., August 18, 1901.

*Hon. M. Cavanagh, Iowa City.*

*My Dear Sir:*—I received your favor, inviting me to attend your annual meeting of Old Settlers of Johnson county, which convenes on the 20th inst., and I have deferred writing until the last moment with an earnest hope that I might be able to attend. On account of sickness in my family I shall not be able to meet with you.

It is a great disappointment to me but such is life. My early life was spent within the bounds of old Johnson. There I married my wife, and my children were born, and among the Old Settlers I had many friends, most of them are removed from her borders, but many still remain, and I should esteem it a great privilege to meet them once more.

God bless you all in your reunion and may you live to enjoy

many recurrences of the same. If I should live another year I hope to be able to attend your next reunion.

With kind regards to yourself and all the Old Settlers that may still remember me. I am as ever,

Your old friend,

D. W. HENDERSON,

Jefferson, Iowa.

SUTHERLAND, IA., August 18, 1901.

*Gentlemen of the Committee on Invitation to the Annual Picnic of the Old Settlers Association of Johnson County, Iowa:*

We received the invitation to your annual picnic with great pleasure. We had hoped that *this* year we might meet the old friends face to face; but find, that we must still defer that pleasure. We wish to thank you, with full hearts, for so kindly remembering us, when sending out invitations to those who formerly lived in dear old Iowa City.

These invitations always open the flood-gates of memory—and we live the old days over again. Again my husband tells me the story of their coming to Iowa. How his father Dr. W. W. Woods first came from Indiana, on horseback, in company with Judge Coleman, and Cornelius Smock; how he purchased an out-block at the southeast corner of the city as then platted; that he returned to Indiana and came back bringing his family with him; that he also brought two four-horse wagons, and one two-horse wagon and a carryall in which the family rode, one or two extra horses, and his pony which he sometimes rode and helped drive the cattle and sheep.

He recalls an incident of the first Sabbath day after reaching Iowa City; his mother had made him ready for church, and he was sitting in the front door of the one room house on Clinton Street which his father had rented for a month, until the cabin on the out-block was completed. Around the corner there came two wagons loaded with stone for the new capitol building that was to be. Each wagon was drawn by six or eight oxen, and their drivers were cracking their long whips, and making the air sing with expletives, as they called their oxen by their various names, already half frightened with the whips and the profanity he was wholly so, when his father grasped

him, slammed the door and deposited him, not in the gentlest manner, on the other side of the room saying—"My son I cannot allow you to listen to such vile language." His memory fails to recall any other incident of the day, but he recalls the fact that those two barefooted, red-headed, freckle-faced boys become fine citizens and one of them, prominent in affairs of state. Dr. Woods afterwards bought the lot on Clinton street and built the house which was the scene of so much hospitality in the forties and early fifties. The house was burned the third year of the war. Hoping that your day will be one of the great pleasures to you all, and that your ranks may be unbroken.

We are sincerely yours,

MR. AND MRS. HUSE WOODS.

Per R. M. M.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 12, 1901.

*Mr. James T. Robinson, Chairman Committee,  
Iowa City, Iowa.*

*Dear Sir:*—I entertained the hope that my official duties and business engagements would permit the acceptance of your kind invitation to be present at the annual reunion of the Old Settlers of Johnson county, but I find at this late day that I shall be deprived of the pleasure. To suspend activities, to escape business rivalries and oppressive care, to dissipate sordid dreams, to abandon for one day the counter and the workshop, the home and the farm, with their perplexing cares and anxieties, are some of the allurements offered in the acceptance of an invitation to these festivities. The noble men and women who annually meet here to exchange greetings and renew friendships fostered under conditions rarely, if ever, encountered in older communities, cherish the memories of the past. In their eager pursuit of wealth and social and intellectual advancement they are not forgetful of family traditions—some of them painted in sombre colors and harrowing in their details—of privations and hardships endured by the pioneer men and women who first peopled these beautiful prairies. Often depressed with cares, despondent under grievous burdens, and sometimes driven to the verge of despair in their anxiety for loved ones, they continued the unequal struggle with Christian fortitude and an abiding faith that time would

ameliorate their condition. The perils to which they were exposed, the discomforts and hardships to which they were constantly subjected, served only to incite them to renewed exertions. They labored unceasingly to remove every obstacle that impeded their progress, and resolutely faced conditions that would have paralyzed the energies of a people less determined and resourceful; and never was courage and industry more liberally rewarded and never did a people more quickly emerge from distressing and almost appalling environments. The virgin soil, even with the rude implements then employed, was not rebellious, but yielded so bountifully as to tax the ingenuity of the husbandman to garner the golden harvests. For many years the local markets absorbed only a small percentage of the products of the farm, and transportation facilities were so limited, or traffic rates so exorbitant, as to render impracticable the transfer of the surplus products to the centers of population, where good prices prevailed. While this unfortunate condition of affairs continued for many years, it was only one of the many adverse circumstances with which these noble people had to contend. Doubtless the future often looked unpromising, but they never despaired of success in the great work in which they were engaged—that of establishing homes for themselves and their families and building up a commonwealth in territory from which the savage had sullenly receded. In every household was witnessed exhibitions of self-denial and rigid economy was enjoined by the inexorable law of necessity.

Humble were the dwellings in which their families were domiciled, and rude the structures in which their children received their first impressions of our public school system. And yet from these rude structures, divested of architectural adornment and lacking in comforts and equipments now considered indispensable, there issued splendid specimens of American manhood and womanhood. In them was reflected the intellectual and moral standard of an ideal frontier settlement. They went forth fully equipped for any emergency that was likely to arise in their struggles for recognition and advancement in their chosen vocations, and were prepared to discharge intelligently and patriotically every duty that devolved upon them as citizens of this great republic. When released from the influence of the home and the restraints of the school they met the greater responsibilities that confronted them in new fields of endeavor. In their ranks the

judiciary found some of its brightest ornaments; the professions to which they were welcomed recognized their skill and attainments; legislative assemblies bowed to their genius, yielded to their persuasive powers and were charmed with their oratory; a grateful people accorded them praise for gallantry in the wild tempest of civil war, and in every avenue of business, where competition was fiercest, they forged to the front with resistless force and energy.

From the list of the sturdy pioneers who first built their habitations on these beautiful prairies the historian or biographer would find much to admire, still more to commend and little to provoke caustic words of criticism. They unflinchingly faced terrorizing elements and the treacherous savage. With undaunted courage and unwearied efforts they applied themselves to the task of bridging streams, establishing highways, bringing under subjection waterways that had never been vexed or disturbed by artificial barriers, erecting school houses, surrounding themselves with comforts and elevating the intellectual and moral standard of the community. They transformed a wilderness into a garden of wealth and beauty. These broad prairies, the scene of their early struggles, are now bedecked with beautiful homes, and thrifty villages and a prosperous city, noted as the seat of a great institution of learning, sit enthroned within our borders.

We recall with pride the names of many who were prominent in our early history and who measurably contributed by their talents, public spirit and industry in producing the magical results that this generation has witnessed. We remember with grateful hearts the Kirkwoods, Clarks, Downeys, Culbertsons, Millers, Sanders', Irishs, Walkers, Shavers, Frys, Hunters, Hess', Howells, Cavanaghs, McCrorys, Lucas', Lathrops, Ten Eicks, Folsoms, Strubles, Westcotts, Porters, Pattersons, Parvins, Swishers, Bonhams, Pauls, Dennis', Finkbines, Closes, Coombs', and scores of others whose names will readily be recalled. Some of these men were of distinguished families, many of them cultured in mind and gifted in speech, and all of them of inflexible business integrity.

In this connection I desire to impress upon the members of this association the importance of preserving in permanent form incidents connected with our early history. Some of those associated with the stirring events of the early period of our county are still living. They can describe these events with accuracy of detail

and invest their narratives with an interest that will command attentive readers in all our homes. It will not be necessary for them to make excursions into the fields of romance for material to construct a story of thrilling interest. A plain recital of details of events in our local history with which they are familiar, without any attempt at literary embellishment, would be read by thousands of our people with as much interest as the most entrancing works of fiction.

Johnson Brigham, in a scholarly address recently delivered before an Iowa City audience, is reported to have deplored the fact that Iowa has developed no writer who has ventured into "two rich fields which belong to the writers of the Middle West, either by right of inheritance or by reason of title acquired through long residence and close touch of sympathy—the heroic period of '61 to '65, and the equally heroic period prior to the Civil War;" but the brilliant lecturer inspired us with hope in the prediction that "ambitious writers will yet seek to infuse into this material the breath of life, and picture for all coming time the pioneer homes of these Middle Western states and the brave, resultful life they led."

Hoping that this suggestion will meet with approval and be productive of results, I remain

Very truly yours,  
J. H. C. WILSON.

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SAN JOSE, CAL., Aug. 14, 1901.

*Old Settlers' Association of Johnson County.*

*Dear Friends:*—When I received your kind invitation a few days ago to attend the reunion of the Old Settlers of Johnson county August 22, 1901, I look back forty-six years. On the 15th of April, 1855, I jumped off the stage in front of the Park House, now the home of the Sisters of Mercy. I then was a young carpenter; did not know one person in the state; but with plenty of Dutch and Yankee pluck I soon found plenty of work to do. The second day after my arrival I went to work for one Wasson and G. W. Schell. I then put in counter and shelves in a building about 150 feet east of the Kimball meat market. One month after my arrival my parents and younger brother arrived from Ohio. Soon thereafter we bought about 400 acres of land two and one-half miles northeast of Solon of Charles Pratt, now a



citizen of Iowa City. Solon then had six or eight settlers, one store, one blacksmith, a half finished hotel, Palmer House, and postoffice. So far as I know now there are only three old settlers left between Solon and Cedar River that were there then; these are Anton Staley, Joseph Caldwell and H. S. Sutliff.

You are all invited to call at 513 South Sixth street, San Jose, Cal. Wishing you all a good time and to meet many times yet,  
Yours truly,

ANDREW BEERMAKER.

MANITOWOC, WIS., Aug. 18, 1901.

*James T. Robinson, Esq., Iowa City, Iowa.*

Dear Sir:—Your kind invitation to me to attend the Old Settlers' reunion was received some time ago, and I delayed answering it until I would hear of the reunion of the 22nd regiment Iowa Volunteer Infantry, and have just received the notice from Secretary Switzer placing the date September 18-19, which I regret to say prevents me meeting with the Old Settlers, as the dates are so far apart. Sorry to say it would be impossible to go so soon and wait for the regiment's reunion, which I will attend the 18th and 19th of September.

Say to the Old Settlers that it would be a great pleasure to me to meet them, while at the same time I feel sorry that quite a number of them who were very dear friends of mine have crossed the river; but you and I are nearing that point from which there is no escape.

Hoping you all may have a happy meeting is my sincere wish.

HARVEY GRAHAM.

QUIMBY, IOWA, Sept. 10th, 1901.

*G. R. Irish, Secretary Old Settlers Association,  
Johnson County, Iowa.*

I was much pleased to meet with the pioneers of Johnson county this year. It carries me back to times and scenes long past. In August, 1848, I took Greeley's advice and left Mansfield, O., for the west. I went to Chicago, thence by canal to LaSalle, and at Peoria took stage for Burlington and Keokuk. In the latter place lived

a young friend of mine named Curtis, who had been writing me to come and go into the grocery business with him. I found his place of business to be about 10x14; and stock consisting of several bottles of whisky. I did not like the appearance of things there, so I started for Iowa City. I went to Bloomington by boat, and there took stage for Iowa City, where I arrived at 2 P. M. and stopped at the North American Hotel, kept by I. N. Sanders. Soon after my arrival a young man, S. J. Hess, stepped up to me and said "A stranger here?" "Yes." "We are going to have a dance at Uncle Joe Stover's and would be pleased to have you come." I replied, "That is just to my hand." We danced till about 2 P. M. at that dance and pleasant company settled me in Iowa City. Soon after 'this' the young people formed a club, George Yewell was chief, he handled the fiddle and called the dance. We had the city and were welcome at any place where there was room. Mrs. Dr. Ballard's and E.C. Lyons' were favorite places. In the spring of '49 the steamer Harold made four trips to Iowa City. The young people had a dance on the boat each trip. In the winter of '49 and '50 about twelve couple took a sleigh ride to Muscatine and had a jolly time for two nights. In the spring of 1850, S. J. Hess and I joined a company for California. Our little two-horse wagon had on its side a box for curry combs, etc. George Yewell painted on it "Little Breeches" which name we were known by. At Salt Lake we joined outfits with Bryan Dennis, Jas. McConnell and John Larcomb. We were in business for two years at Bidwells Bar. In the fall of 1852 I returned to Ohio, and in the spring of 1854 came back to Iowa City to engage in the hardware business. Iowa City and its old settlers will always be remembered by me with much pleasure.

EDMUND SHEPARD.

HAMILTON H. KERR.

In 1839 there came to Johnson county a young unmarried man from the state of Pennsylvania. He made a claim and afterwards entered land in Big Grove township, and with Timothy B. Clark and Paul B. Anders subsequently made a dedication of the original townsite of Solon and gave it the classic name which it bears of the great Athenian lawgiver. He was the first postmaster at



Solon, and served as such for a number of years. This man was Hamilton H. Kerr, who departed this life some four years since, and it is felt that something should be said here in honor of his memory. Mr. Kerr was a man of most sterling worth and unblemished character, always aligning himself on the side of the right as he understood it against the wrong; a good neighbor, a fast friend, just in all his dealings with his fellow men, a public-spirited citizen and withal so modest and unassuming, so wanting in self-assertion, that people who were not his immediate neighbors knew but little of his intrinsic worth. He lived for many years at the home he first established, and then sold out and bought a small farm near Iowa City across the Iowa river, on which he resided several years, until his advanced age and that of his wife made it advisable that they should give up the active operations of the farm, after which they made their home with their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Breese of Union township. This continued to be their home until Mr. Kerr's death in 1897, and it is still Mrs. Kerr's home.

Mr. Kerr was very social in his tastes and highly prized the society of his old friends and neighbors, and in the later years of his life made many visits to their homes, where he was always received with the greatest pleasure and cordiality. In short, suffice it to say that his life was a model of domestic, social and civic virtue, and if any man among the pioneers in letter and very spirit kept every one of the command of the decalogue and observed in all its divine beauty the precept of the Golden Rule, that man was Hamilton H. Kerr.

His early life here had all the trials and vicissitudes incident to those pioneer days, but he was called upon to go through a trial and endure a privation that did not necessarily belong to pioneer life.

I said at the outset that when he came here Mr. Kerr was an unmarried man; now, while this was true, it is also true that he came to select a place in which to establish a home which a fair daughter of the old Keystone state had promised to share with him. She, his affianced wife, he left behind him until he should go to the faraway trans-Mississippi country, the land of beautiful Iowa, which was then firing the imagination of the young men and maidens of that day in the older states, as the place of all others in which to seek and build elysian homes for themselves and their offspring.

When Mr. Kerr came it was his purpose to return within a year and ask the young lady who had promised to become his wife to fulfill her promise. He brought with him a sum of money, the savings of his modest earnings for some years. This money would enable him to provide the home which he was looking forward to with so much anticipated happiness, and to pay his expenses back to Pennsylvania and the return with the wedded woman of his heart. But, alas, he had formed the acquaintance of an honest (?) blacksmith of the neighboring county of Cedar, to whom he loaned his money as an accommodation for a few days; but the few days grew into many days, and the days into months and months into years, and his money was still loaned—a permanent investment—and so the years of this painful waiting dragged their weary length along, until the celebrated historical waiting of Jacob for Rachel was threatened with eclipse.

As it was out of the question for Mr. Kerr to get the money he had loaned he was compelled to wait the slow process of earning enough to assist him in carrying out the plans so dear to his heart. But earning money then in Iowa was a slow process at best in any vocation, and Mr. Kerr being an artisan patronized only by those who could afford tailor-made apparel, his patrons were not many and his earnings were necessarily slow.

But at last in 1847, eight long years after he came, Mr. Kerr succeeded in getting his affairs in shape, and as all things are said to have an end, so this long waiting, and he hid himself away to the betrothed of his heart, and as he had withstood the charms and blandishments of the pioneer belles and beauties of Iowa in that early time, and she had kept her plighted troth, they were married; and who shall say that the long enforced separation of this devoted pair, the "hope deferred that maketh the heart sick," has not added zest and bliss to the almost fifty years of their wedded life which followed, for it was a most happy union. Not that they had no sorrow, for that is not possible in the lives of sentient beings like ourselves. For out of a family of six children born of this union four sweetly sleep beside their father, beneath the grassy sod in the little cemetery at Solon. It has been said that "it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved," and is it not better that children be born, though they die in infancy, than that the parents should always have been childless? For is not the memory of these departed little ones and the hope of meeting them in the great hereafter a source of sublimated joy and happiness?

I should say that Mrs. Kerr (or rather Miss Brooks, for this was her maiden name) beguiled the tedium of the eight slow-passing years of Mr. Kerr's absence in Iowa before his return to her by teaching school, and that among her pupils who attended her school for a number of terms in her young girlhood was the mother of the Honorable A. B. Cummins, and who shall determine how much this teaching of his mother by Mrs. Kerr has influenced the aspirations and ambitions which have led him to the conspicuous place he occupies in the eyes of the people of Iowa and made him the candidate of the great Republican party for the highest office in their gift?

In justice to Mrs. Kerr I wish to say that she did not know that there was to be anything said here today in relation to her late husband or herself, otherwise I have no doubt her native modesty and disposition to shrink from public observation would have caused her to withhold her consent. I beg her pardon for taking such a liberty, my only justification being that the valuable lesson of their lives should have more publicity.

M. CAVANAGH.

#### DEATH OF WILLIAM STURGIS.

PIONEER WHO HELPED TO LOCATE THE CAPITAL AT IOWA CITY,  
PASSED AWAY IN FLORIDA.

The Michigan Democrat and Sturgis Times of Sturgis, Mich., dated April 18, contains the following life sketch of a pioneer who had much to do with blazing the path of civilization and progress in this state.

William Sturgis was born April 14, 1817, at Mount Pleasant, province of Upper Canada, died at New Smyrna, Fla., April 6, 1901, aged 83 years, 11 months and 22 days.

The eldest son of that sturdy pioneer, the late Judge John Sturgis, the first settler of Sturgis prairie, in honor of whom the village, now city, was named, he too has been a pioneer throughout a long and eventful life. When less than a year old his parents moved to Brownstown, in the then territory of Michigan, at the head of Lake Erie, being carried across the Detroit river on the ice in his mother's arms.

When eleven years of age he accompanied his parents on their pioneer journey from Brownstown to this vicinity with ox teams and helped to build their home, the first cabin upon Sturgis prairie. The following seven years were devoted to assisting his father in pioneer work developing the resources of the homestead. When eighteen years of age he struck out for himself, crossed the Mississippi, located and secured a section of land that subsequently was included in the site of Iowa City and helped to secure the location of the territorial capital of Iowa there.

Not content with farming, he pushed up into the wilderness and located the townsite now city of Cedar Falls and developed the water power, disposing of his Iowa City property for the purpose of building his dam and mill. He also developed the water power and had a mill where the city of Waterloo now stands. He subsequently moved to St. Paul, where he purchased several tracts of land now covered by the city.

The spirit of the pioneer impelled him to push on into the great timber tract of Minnesota, and he built a dam and sawmill and located the townsite of the present city of Little Falls, and during his residence there was representative in the territorial legislature of Minnesota.

While living here and in the interest of securing the location of a government road through that way, he made a trip on foot in midwinter with a half-breed Indian for a companion and a compass for guide, from Little Falls to the head of Lake Superior, where the city of Duluth now stands, subsisting the latter part of the journey on a few partridges that he was able to kill and sleeping nights rolled in their blankets in the deep snow. A heavy snowstorm came on and in the intense cold they nearly perished before reaching their destination. He also returned on foot to St. Paul.

Associating with him Messrs. Fergus and Tuttle, an extensive lumbering and mercantile business was conducted and a thriving village built up. Desiring to branch out and secure more power for manufacturing and the location of other industries, they built a dam across the Mississippi river costing \$50,000. The financial panic of 1857 followed, business was paralyzed, the company was unable to meet its obligations and failed.

Still undaunted, Mr. Sturgis pushed on still further into the wilderness and with nothing but his hands and brain for capital started a mill at Little Elk and was again on the road to prosper-

ity. He had a fine business started and his winter's logging in the boom when the high waters swept away his mill and took his logs down into the Mississippi. Undismayed, he went to St. Paul and without other security than his indomitable will and persevering spirit secured money with which to rebuild his dam cut logs and again put the business in operation.

The gold discoveries in California were attracting the attention of pioneers in all parts of the country and in 1862 he fitted out an ox team, left the mill for his wife to manage and joined a caravan that struck out for the golden state over a new trail that had for its guide-board only the setting sun. Reaching the divide in the Rockies in what is now Montana he stopped in Beaver Head valley in the midst of a rich grazing country and surrounded by rich mineral prospects near where Dillon is now located. He established a stage station at Beaver Head canyon, built a stage road that greatly shortened the route from Salt Lake City to the northern part of the state and located a fine ranch property nearby that is watered by a large spring that bubbles out of the bench plateau above and furnishes a fine stream of water for stock and irrigation. It is now known as Lovell's Ranch and is the finest location in the valley.

There being no sawmills in the country to meet the demands of the developing civilization, he undertook to establish one and secured his first saw and some mill irons from an Indian mission several hundred miles to the north and started the first mill in the country at Bannock. He afterward started another mill at Argenta, and had two in operation at one time, together with his ranch and stage station.

After having been in the mountains five years he sent for his family, which he had left at Little Elk, where Mrs. Sturgis had managed the mill during his absence, and they went to him by the way of St. Louis, where they took passage on a steamboat on the Missouri river. The trip to Fort Benton required three months on the boat, and from there they journeyed 300 miles in a wagon which he had sent for them. In company with four others he located and developed the now famous Hecla silver mine near Glendale, that has produced over two million dollars in bullion and aided largely in the development of the resources in the vicinity of the present city of Dillon and that part of the state.

The high altitude of the mountains finally affected his health

and in 1873 he disposed of his several properties and returned with his family to his boyhood home on the Sturgis prairie.

He was subsequently engaged in the sheep business in Kansas and the real estate business at Socorro, N. M. It was his ambition to improve all property that came in his control and to advance every business proposition which appealed to him as practical and worthy of support. And in furtherance of his ambition has been upon the advance guard of civilization nearly all his life, leading the way to the best opportunities for the improvement of the natural resources of the country. For several winters he has sought relief from the cold in the temperate climate of Florida. His bodily infirmities increased with advancing years and his spirit was released from the body at his Southern home.

During his long and active life he was progressive in all things and helped to move the race forward in civilization and development. In his religious views, as in material things, he was a pioneer, firmly believing in spirit life beyond the grave and spirit communion after death.

Mr. Sturgis was twice married, his first wife being Miss Dorothy Kidder, whom he married at Iowa City, and to them were born three children, Jennette, now Mrs. S. W. Turner of Minneapolis; Jane, now Mrs. John M. Kelley, and John K. Sturgis, now of Salt Lake City, Utah. Mrs. Sturgis died at Little Falls, Minn., and he subsequently married Miss Rosanna Steel at Iowa City, Iowa, April 12, 1852, and to their union seven children were born; Mrs. Ann Trask, Amos and Arthur Jay, deceased, the survivors being Mrs. Kate Poindexter, Dillon, Mont.; Mrs. Nellie Evarts, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Mrs. J. S. Flanders and Will R., of Sturgis. Mrs. Sturgis died May 21, 1898.

Of the original family of Judge Sturgis and wife and five children who landed on Sturgis prairie in the spring of 1827 but two remain, John and George, who reside here. Of the brothers and sisters who were born here the survivors are Thomas and Henrietta, who reside here, Mrs. Hannah Miller of Cedar Falls, Iowa, and David Sturgis of Healdsburg, Cal.

The remains of Mr. Sturgis were received from the South Thursday evening and the funeral services held at his homestead on West Chicago street Friday afternoon, Rev. Dr. Denslow officiating, with burial in the family lot in Oak Lawn cemetery.

## AN OLD LETTER EXHUMED.

The other day when Dr. E. F. Clapp was moving his office he indulged in a little rummaging through some old papers that have accumulated in the past, and among other things he found a letter written by A. P. Stule on April 12, 1855. It is written on a plain sheet of cap paper in a very legible hand and is well preserved. We herewith print it verbatim:

Iowa City, April 12, 1855.

*Mr. G. T. Augustine.*

*Dear Sir:*—I take up my pen to inform you that I am well and hope that these few lines may find you the same. We arrived here on Sunday, safe. I did not get time to go out by grandfather's, as I got word to come right to the city. George, it is one of the dearest countries you ever see. It is nothing but a field of grass. I am on the road from Fort Des Moines to Newton. I start for there this morning. Tell Matilda that she had better make up her mind to stay where she is, for I do not think she will like the country. I do not for my part, although a man can save all his earnings here, for there is no way to spend it. I have bought a lot in the city for \$200 and have been offered \$50 for my bargain. It is very healthy here at present. There is some fever and ague, but we are used to that. Give my respects to all inquiring friends.

Yours truly,

A. P. STULE.

P. S.—Direct to me in care Western Stage Co., Iowa City, Ia.

## A PIONEER BRIDAL.

Mr. and Mrs. John Sueppel, Sr., unostentatiously celebrated the forty-second anniversary of their marriage yesterday.

There were no demonstrations and no formal observance of the happy event, but the "bride and groom" received many congratulations from the warm friends who recalled the fact that the veteran grocer and his estimable wife had been pronounced one September 12, 1859.

The bride was then Miss Catherine Rohret, daughter of the late Wolfgang Rohret. Her home was at Old Man's Creek, and the young groom, though not an impersonator of Leander, who swam the Hellespont for his loved one, or Lochinvar, who bore

away his bride on the fleet steed, Mr. Sueppel, in claiming his bride, called to mind both the ancient and the more modern gallants.

To bring Miss Rohret to Iowa City, where Rev. Father Edmonds might pronounce the words that made the couple husband and wife, it was necessary for the prospective groom to ford the Iowa river, and of course the ever ready equine friend of man played a part in that journey to the west side. The lower river bridge was then building, and the abutments were going into place. The contractor was a former sheriff of Johnson county—Marshal Scott Wilson's father, by the way. Thus the young man found it was incumbent upon him to drive through the rolling waters of the Iowa, and he accomplished this feat with no hesitation.

He brought back his sweetheart, the priest was summoned and the young woman, now long a noble wife and mother, became Mrs. Sueppel.

"And may their shadow never grow less!"

The following is an imperfect list of those present.

|                         |                           |                    |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Adams, J. E.            | Custer, Earl              | Poster, W. E. C.   |
| Adams, A. F.            | Cannon, Sr., W. D.        | Fry, John          |
| Adams, J. M.            | Corlett, J. K.            | Graham, Thos.      |
| Adams, P. A.            | Cropley, Sarah P.         | Gill, Adam         |
| Adams, J. L.            | Curtis, Calvin            | Gherke, Henry      |
| Alderman, P. A.         | Cox, Thomas B. and wife.  | Greulich, John     |
| Burge, J. M.            | Clark, Mrs. John H.       | Hill, Zion         |
| Babbitt, Mrs. Joseph    | Dixon, D. M.              | Hart, J. W.        |
| Boarts, David           | Douglass, Larimar         | Hevern, R.         |
| Boarts, Miss Ella       | Devault, Strawder         | Hunter, L.         |
| Boarts, Mrs. Charles    | Dunkle, Wm.               | Hastings, Henry    |
| Bradley, Mrs. Abner     | Dennis, Bryan             | Heath, J. R.       |
| Bradley, Smith          | Dalton, Byron             | Howell, R. P.      |
| Butler, J. W. and wife. | Ellson, Mrs. John         | Hemstead, F. W.    |
| Butler, M. V. and wife. | Ernest, William and wife. | Holton, O. M.      |
| Borland, G. T.          | Emery, A. H.              | Hotz, Mrs. Barbara |
| Brown, Alonzo           | Fry, S. P.                | Hughes, J. P.      |
| Balluff, E. A.          | Fairall, S. H.            | Hill, O. C.        |
| Beuter, A. W.           | Francis, Chas. F.         | Hess, S. J.        |
| Buchanan, W. H.         | Fairchild, T.             | Hemphill, J. K.    |
| Cox, Mrs. C. B.         | Francis, Miss Anna        | Hanke, Wm.         |
| Cavanaugh, M.           |                           | Hitchcock, George  |
| Coldren, J. N.          |                           | Hamilton, H.       |



|                             |                         |                           |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Howell, J. M.               | McCallister, James      | Schneider, A. J.          |
| Irish, Mrs. C. W.           | McChesney, R. A.        | Sutliff, H. S.            |
| Irish, Mrs. G. R.           | Nelson, Geo.            | Seeman, Z.                |
| Irish, G. M.                | Neuzil, Frank           | Seydell, M. A. and wife.  |
| Jayne, John E.              | Owen, Benj.             | Schwimley, Rev. A.        |
| Jones, George               | Plum, J.                | Switzer, J. E.            |
| Kessler, M.                 | Pratt, Wm. E.           | TenEick, Mrs. Ed. G.      |
| Kirkpatrick, Mrs. M. G.     | Pratt, Chas.            | TenEick, Anselm and wife. |
| Koontz, G. W.               | Plum, J. L.             | Toms, Hiram               |
| Keen, R. A.                 | Pratt, A. W.            | Trotten, Truman           |
| Kramer, Jacob               | Robinson, J. T.         | Thompson, Mrs. Chas.      |
| Kohl, Frank                 | Ressler, J. J.          | Thompson, Miss Sibbie     |
| Lucas, Chas. A.             | Ressler, Mrs. J. J.     | Thompson, Ezra            |
| Lindsley, F. D.             | Remley, Milton          | Umrath, John              |
| Locey, J. F.                | Rittenmeyer, F. X.      | VonStein, J. P.           |
| Lyon, Levi                  | Rittenmeyer, Mrs.       | Richardson, A. and wife   |
| Miles, William              | Robertson, A. and wife  | Weaver, Peter             |
| Moore, C. G.                | Robertson, Mrs. Harris  | Weber, J. S.              |
| Miller, Phillip             | Robertson, Miss Julia   | Wieneke, H. J.            |
| Morford, J. W.              | Robinson, Charles E.    | Westcott, Emory           |
| Moore, Bruce                | Sanders, Horace         | Walker, James             |
| Moore, Mrs. Inez G.         | Struble, J. T.          | Walker, H. W.             |
| Metzger, J. J. and wife.    | Sweet, Wm.              | Walker, Henry, Sr.        |
| Miller, J. M.               | Stackman, Frank         | Whitacre, E. P.           |
| Miller, John                | Stover, J. Y.           | Williams, O. R.           |
| Miller, Mary L.             | Shepperd, J. F.         | Wilson, J. S.             |
| McKray, Jr. J. R. and wife. | Startsman, O.           | Wilson, Sarah             |
| McKray, Sr. J. R. and wife. | Schell, J. W.           | Wilson, Mrs. Edna B.      |
| McGrader, George            | Stratton, Mrs. Frank    | Wilson, Miss Basteleva    |
| McCallister, John           | Springer, Mrs. Charles  | Wilson, Miss Anna         |
|                             | Stewart, Mrs. Mary      |                           |
|                             | Stewart, Miss Joanna D. |                           |

### SOME PIONEERS.

Of the many present there were a score or more whose lives reach far back into the past century. The names and ages of several real old settlers are here given.

|  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| James McKray, Sr., 84.                       | Mrs. James McKray, 80.      |
| Jessie K. Strawbridge, 82.                   | Fredrick W. Hemsted, 87.    |
| Phillip Miller, 87.                          | Peter Wenner, 84.           |
| Mrs. David J. Wilson, 89, 8 months, 11 days. | Mrs. M. C. Kirkpatrick, 85. |
| Mrs. Benjamin Graham, 83.                    | Mrs. Isaac Bowen, 77.       |
| F. X. Rittenmeyer, 81.                       | Strawder Devault, 83.       |
| Bryan Dennis, 83.                            | Milton Seydell, 77.         |
| James T. Robinson, 79.                       | J. F. Shepherd, 81.         |
|  | Mrs. Peter Dalton, 79.      |

J. Y. Stover, 78.

### SOME YOUNG PIONEERS.

The first boy and girl born in Iowa City were on the grounds, Miss Mary Hannah TenEick and William Dunkel, their infantile cry was mingled with the hoarse whoop of the Indian as he disappeared behind the western hills. Time has touched these pioneer babies with gentle hand.

### OFFICERS.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year, all by acclamation:

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| President—RALPH P. HOWELL.  |
| Vice-President—S. D. FRY.   |
| Treasurer—HENRY J. WIENEKE. |
| Secretary—G. R. IRISH.      |



### REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP.

All persons who are non-residents of Johnson county, who were residents of Iowa at the time of the adoption of the first State Constitution for the State of Iowa are eligible to membership. All persons hereafter that have resided twenty years in Iowa and are residents of Johnson county, may become members by applying to the executive committee. Every member shall sign the constitution and pay to the Treasurer fifty cents and thereafter twenty-five cents annually.

The Old Settlers Association of Johnson county was organized February 22, 1866.

President—DAVID SWITZER.

First Vice President—F. M. IRISH.

Second Vice President—ROBERT WALKER.

Treasurer—PETER ROBERTS.

Secretary—SILAS FOSTER.

SAMUEL H. McCORRY

T. S. PARVIN

E. W. LUCAS

} Committee to Draft Constitution.

It is the purpose of the executive committee to arrange the proceedings of the association prior to 1898 and procure their publication uniform with those since that date. All members will take notice and lend a hand in aid of this arrangement and by so doing help to preserve in permanent form the interesting records of what will soon be the dim past.

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### A FEW THINGS REQUIRED.

Many years ago the old men of the association gathered the material and erected a pair of cabins as reminders of the past. They were an ornament to the landscape and a credit to the men who built them. Time has removed very many of the men who, bent with age, but with stout hearts and willing hands, built these monuments of the good old days of pioneer times. Time has also made its mark upon the work of those old men and it is imperatively demanded that the cabins be put in repair and the grove about them be replenished. Talk and promised effort will not do the work. Action, prompt, good natured effort by each and all of us is what is required. No great draft upon the pocket is needed. The annual dues from each and all will be ample.

G. R. IRISH.